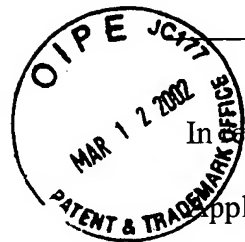


3731

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



In application of: Ronald E. DYKES

Attorney Docket No.: 21917-P003US

Application No.: 10/016,984

Examiner: To Be Assigned

Filed: December 7, 2001

Group: 3731

Title: PROTECTION SYSTEM FOR SURGICAL
INSTRUMENTS

PATENT

TECHNOLOGY CENTER R37D0

MAR 13 2002

RECEIVED

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING
(37 C.F.R. 1.8)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231 on the date indicated below:

Date: March 6, 2002

Signed: Renee Glazer

Name: RENEE GLAZER

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
UNDER 37 CFR §§1.56 AND 1.97(c)

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
BOX PATENT APPLICATION
Washington, DC 20231

Dear Sir:

The references listed in the attached PTO Form SB/08A, copies of which are attached, may be material to examination of the above-identified patent application. Applicants submit these references in compliance with their duty of disclosure pursuant to 37 CFR §§1.56 and 1.97. The Examiner is requested to make these references of official record in this application.

This Information Disclosure Statement is not to be construed as a representation that a search has been made, that additional information material to the examination of this application does not exist, or that these references indeed constitute prior art.

This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed within three (3) months of the filing date of the above-referenced application. Accordingly, it is believed that no fees are due in connection with the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement. However, if it is determined that any fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 23-2426 (Order No. 21917-P003US).

Respectfully submitted,
WINSTEAD SECHREST & MINICK, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Donoughue", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Timothy M. Donoughue
Registration No. 46,668

2400 Bank One Center
910 Travis Street
Houston, TX 77002
Telephone: (713) 650-2705
Facsimile: (713) 650-2400